



First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
Stow, OH

3493 Darrow Road, Stow, Ohio 44224
330.688.4450
www.firstchristianstow.org

PATHWAYS NOVEMBER 2022

*You show me the path of life. In
your presence there is fullness of joy.*
Psalm 16:11

Find us on social
media @FCCStow!

Thanksgiving Day Potluck Lunch

November 20th, 11:30 a.m., After Sanctuary Service

We hope you'll join us after worship for this special time of fellowship over a holiday lunch!

Christmas Ingathering Outreach

December 20th & 21st

Preparation is underway! See below for more info on how to help!

Relay for Life Craft Bazaar

November 12th, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Visit the Bazaar! Proceeds benefit American Cancer Society.

Trustee Workday

November 12th, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

It's time for our fall cleanup! Leaves will be raked, and other projects are available for those helping. Many hands make light work!

Daylight Saving Time – November 6th

Get ready to FALL BACK! We're getting an extra hour of sleep and coming to church extra-rested (Hopefully)!

8:30 a.m. Service in the Chapel

For those of us who prefer an earlier worship time, Chapel service is ongoing and available at 8:30 a.m. every Sunday!

Advent, 2022

Begins November 27th. Read on to hear about our Advent season!

November Governing Board Meeting

November 21st, 7 p.m. via Zoom

Pastor's Pen

November 2022

It's hard to believe it has been thirteen years since I became your pastor. It seems like just yesterday I pulled into the church parking lot and parked my car in the "Reserved For Pastor" spot. It seems like just yesterday when I held my first staff meeting. It seems like just yesterday when I stood up to preach my first sermon here. Anyone remember that sermon?! I sure do because I was so nervous! I kept thinking, "What if I mess this up!?" Maybe some of you were nervous too, and kept thinking, "What if he messes this up!?" But it's not just how nervous I was that I remember, I remember also what I preached.

The title of the sermon was "*The River of Life*" and the text was Revelation 22:1-5, because, you know, the day wasn't already challenging enough so why not up the ante by preaching from perhaps the most difficult book of the Bible! (What was I thinking?!?) Nevertheless, it was God's word for that day for it gave us a glimpse of the vision for the Church—to be encouraged, empowered, and motivated to keep going no matter the adversity, struggle, or challenges—especially in a world where God seems absent. That was what the church in Revelation struggled with, and that same struggle can infect our thoughts today—which is why we started with Revelation thirteen years ago. We as a church have work and ministry to tend to, and we must find hope and encouragement and empowerment and be reminded that though the world seems determined to destroy itself, God is in fact still creating, God is still making all things new, God has not given up, and neither should we, because that is the role of the Church—to bring and share and show the Good News that God is at work, and God's work is always for good.

During that sermon I shared for the first time the story my missionary friend Elena Huegal always shares, the story of the little stone, which I have shared several times since, each time passing out a little stone at the end of the service as a reminder we are all God's little stones, and God will surely use us to bring down the giants of today.

As I look back on the last thirteen years, I can see clearly how God has worked in us and through us to be God's little stones to make a difference by bringing down many a giant. God has blessed us, and in turn used us to bless others, through our work, ministry, and mission. I have been amazed to see how we as a church have opened wide our doors, how we have sought to give more than we have received, how we have allowed ourselves to dream dreams and follow faithfully a God given vision of loving God and our neighbor as ourselves. Everything I have had the honor and privilege to see, lead, and be a part of over the last thirteen years is evidence that First Christian Church of Stow permits God's River of Life to flow freely through us, allowing its waters to wash over each of us in transformative and difference making ways.

For all of it I give thanks to God. For each of you, and for all the Saints we have had to say goodbye to in this life, I give thanks to God. For the chance and the blessing to be your pastor, I give thanks to God. And on behalf of Julie, Violet, and A.J., we thank each of you for embracing us as members of this church family. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve as your pastor and to serve along with you as we seek to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. I can't wait to see what God will do in and through us in the years ahead.

Your Pastor and Friend,
Jonathan

Relay for Life Craft Bazaar,
Nov. 12th 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Join us for the Craft Bazaar! Fellowship and Disciples Hall will be filled with crafts goods. Vendors will be selling everything from carved wood, knitted goods, soaps and knick-knacks, and we may even have vendors from Mary Kay and Tupperware. Come to the Bazaar and find your Christmas Gifts for the whole family! If you're a Black Friday shopper like Christian, this is a great chance to shop and support local craftspeople, and dodge all the busyness after Thanksgiving. It's a better day to stay home with the family! Proceeds benefit American Cancer Society.

Andrea's 30 Year Anniversary

November 2022 marks 30 years (That's correct: 3-0) years that Andrea Drews has been providing music to our church as our pianist/organist. We will recognize and celebrate this milestone in Worship on Sunday, November 13th, and will be hosting a coffee hour and fellowship as well. But, if you're so moved, please bring a card or note of appreciation to the church that Sunday. If you're unable to attend in person, feel free to mail one to the church office marked for the attention of Andrea. Thank you for helping with this!

Making Spirits Bright!

Parents Day Out

Saturday December 3rd, 9 a.m. - 1p.m.

Parents! Bring your children for a morning full of holiday fun while you enjoy some time to shop, wrap, bake, or just relax! Please let us know if your child is attending so we can plan accordingly. Email or text Cora at coradowey@yahoo.com or 330-592-3170

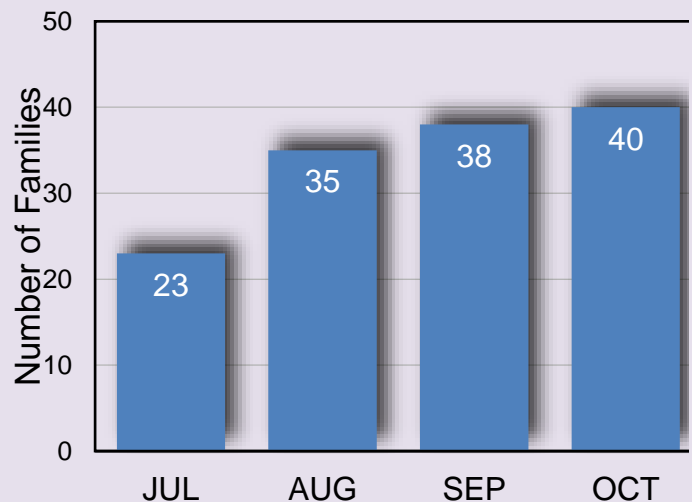
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Loaves & Fishes + Pantry
October Report

Our Loaves & Fishes + Pantry continued to grow in October. We served 105 meals of Ham, Scalloped Potatoes and Green Beans.

Our next Loaves & Fishes + Pantry will take place on November 20 from 4-6 p.m. The Drive Thru Meal will have yummy turkey casserole, green beans, applesauce and a roll.

This chart shows our increased over the past four months. As you can we had a big jump from July to August and then a slow but steady increase.



We have every reason to believe that this increase will continue. In October we had 6 families visiting us for the first time.

We provided groceries for 32 seniors, 47 adults and 25 children. Each family received 5 bags of groceries including (but not limited to) potato chips and breads and peanut butter and canned veggies and beef ravioli as well as laundry detergent and cleaning supplies. As always, the people receiving the meals and groceries are universally grateful to our church for providing this free service.

Bulldog Bags

Nov. 9. Fruit Cups

Dec. 7 Hot Chocolate Packets

Jan 11 Ramen Noodle Packets

Church Thanksgiving Dinner
Sunday, November 20th, 11:30 a.m.

On Sunday, November 20th, all are invited to be part of a special Thanksgiving time of worship followed by our Church's annual Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner. If you know someone who can't make an entire Thanksgiving dinner, or doesn't have a family to share with, invite them and bring them along! **Please bring a place setting for yourself so we can save on plates and cutlery!**

Please make your reservation on the back of your connection Card or by calling the church office. **All who attend are asked to share a dish or two that serves 12.** We also ask that you mark your dishes and lids with your name. Turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, and drinks will be provided (Fellowship and good company included!).

Thanksgiving is a blessed time to share in a bountiful meal and robust fellowship with our families. Mark your calendars for this special day of worship to celebrate all that we give thanks for, and give glory, honor and praise to the One who has made it all possible. Thanks be to God.

Christmas Ingathering Outreach
December 20th and 21st, 2022

Outreach is hard at work preparing for our Christmas Ingathering. We are obtaining information from the schools of families requesting assistance, contacting our outside sponsors as well as contacting the many of you who so graciously sponsor a family, shop for families, wrap presents, and donate food and monies that make this program such a success for the families in our community year after year. Donations now, of food and monies, are greatly appreciated

YOUTH GROUP

Sunday, November 6th!

11:40 am-1:10 pm

We will be discussing what our purpose as a youth group is and how we can help out in this time of Thanksgiving. Lunch will be provided!

Sunday, November 20th!

3:30pm-6pm

Loaves and Fishes!

We will be helping out with this year's loaves and fishes Thanksgiving dinner!

Sunday, December 4th!

11:40 am-1:40 pm

Target Shopping Day!

We will be meeting in the youth group room to get organized for our trip then we will be off to Target to start shopping for the in gathering. Parents, please pick up your child at the Stow Target at 1:40pm.

Sunday, December 11th!

11:35-1pm

Christmas Party/Gift Wrapping!

We will be wrapping our gifts for the in gathering and having a little Christmas celebration! Food will be provided.

The month of November is a time for thanksgiving. This is a great time of the year to be thankful for all of God's blessings. One of the best ways to give thanks is to help others. So we will be helping out with the loaves and fishes dinner and sharing a thanksgiving meal with members in our community. We are so grateful to be able to help out with such an amazing ministry that has been started within our church. I look forward to spending this time of thanksgiving with the people I am thankful for.

Katie Taylor, Director of Youth

as we prepare to share the joy of Advent with upwards of 50 families. If you would like more information or have questions about how you can support this amazing ministry, please see Ann Halpin or call 330-524-2228.

Voting Day, November 8th

Make your voice heard! To find your Polling location, you can click the link here if you're reading online:

<https://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/toolkits/polling-location/>

Early voting is available until November 7th, by visiting the Board of Elections at the Summit County Early Vote Center (Address listed below).

500 Grant St
Akron OH 44311

A Prayer for All Saint's Day From PrayMoreNovenas.com

As we celebrate the great cloud of witnesses behind us, let us pray and be thankful for the Saints who have touch our lives, and the Saints who paved the way long before us. Below is a prayer to keep in your heart this Tuesday as we celebrate and remember.

“Thank you for the example of the Saints. I desire to join in their company, worshiping you forever in Heaven. Please help me follow their footsteps, and yours, Jesus Christ. Please help me to conform myself to Your image, seeking Your will in all things, as the Saints did. Please help me to devote myself, and all that I do, to Your glory, and to the service of my neighbors. Amen.”

MUSIC NOTES

Schedule Reminder

Musicians! Singers! Below is the Music Schedule for November 2022, with additional reminders for the Children's Bell and Choir schedules.

11/6 Chancel Choir (10:30 service)

11/13 Youth Bells, Joy Bells (10:30 service)
Andrea's 30th anniversary as
organist/accompanist

11/20 Chancel Choir (10:30 service)
Thanksgiving Sunday

11/27 Ladies' Chorus (10:30 service)
(Tentative)
1st Sunday of Advent

The Children's Choir will be meeting during the Children's Church time on Sunday mornings. Our goal for them this year is to teach them Christian Children's choruses and have them sing in church on the last Sunday of each month. This first Sunday Children's Choir performance was a great success!

Thanks to the parents for involving them and the kids for participating!

Children's Bell Choir is continuing to meet in the Bell Balcony 10 minutes after Sanctuary service ends and rehearses for 30 minutes. Those who are also in the youth group will rehearse with us on the days they don't meet with the youth group, just like last year.

Relay for Life Craft Bazaar
Nov. 12th, 9am – 3pm

We're hosting the 6th annual Relay for Life Craft Bazaar! All morning through 3 p.m., the church will be filled with crafts, such as knitted goods, cards, jewelry, baked goods, baskets, carved wood, wreathes, gift baskets, kitchen items, placemats, or even Mary Kay, Tupperware, or Pampered Chef. There's a great variety at the Bazaar—Visit the vendors round out your Christmas Shopping or find a gift for yourself!

Admission to the event is free! Lunch will be available for purchase (such as hot dogs, sloppy joes, soup, chili, and drinks). Visit the Bazaar and find your next

Sellers pay a modest fee for their space in the church, and all funds benefit the American Cancer Society - Relay for Life. See below for further vendor details.

Mailed Agreements with payment must be made to Becky Blankenship, 72 Judson Rd., Kent, OH 44240. Payment must be received no later than October 23rd. Spots are not guaranteed until money and agreement is received. Money from table rentals and door prize tickets will benefit the American Cancer Society Relay for Life. Tables are \$30 and if electric is needed there are a limited number of tables with access to electric plugs for \$40. We are also asking for a donation from each crafter and vendor for the door prizes. 2 chairs are provided with each space rented.

Many Thanks! + Décor Change
November 20th
From Ann Halpin

Thank you to all folks who stayed after church to help switch the church décor to fall! It was a tremendous help to make less trips up and down the stairs and my knee thanks you!!!

STEWARDSHIP
CHALLENGE

A Prayer for
Thanksgiving

In a recent Elders Meeting, we talked about what this church does especially well. We want to remind you that First Christian Church does missions and community outreach with great impact on our community. These programs are paid for by your generosity through your time, your treasures and your talent. Let us continue to share our treasures with the one who grants them to us all in this world, so that this church can continue to serve our Lord through our community outreach. Pray with us a thanksgiving prayer for our stewardship and our offerings.

Heavenly Father, truly, we are your servants. In you, we live and move and have our being. We offer you our thanksgiving and call on your name. We love you, Lord God, for you hear us and respond in graciousness and compassion and righteousness. You deliver our souls from death, our feet from stumbling, and our eyes from tears. Now receive our tithes and offerings, we pray. Multiply them so that your work and word can go fourth. Amen.

Of course, the biggest decorating holiday is just around the corner... Only 90 days until Christmas! Church decor will need to be changed after the services on NOVEMBER 20th and throughout that week- so we are ready for the first Sunday of Advent on November 27th. Many hands are needed to haul the trees out from the narthex, haul boxes of ornaments and wreaths out from storage, and carry all the fall decor upstairs to be put away. We have 6 Christmas trees to decorate so please consider doing one as a family project. If you would like to volunteer or have any questions, please see Ann Halpin or call 330-524-2228.

Bonus Pastor's Pen! **"No-Shave November"**

Things are about to get hairy around the church because once again it is *No Shave November!*—a month-long journey during which participants forgo shaving and grooming in order to evoke conversation and raise cancer awareness.

No-Shave November has been a tradition for years as November marks the beginning of the cold weather months. In 2009, after their father passed away from colon cancer, the eight children of Matthew Hill decided to reinvent the activity to raise awareness and money for charity by encouraging folks to forgo shaving and donate the dollars saved to cancer charities.

In July of 2017 I lost my Dad to colon cancer. But my Dad wasn't the only person in my life affected and impacted by cancer. There are others—too many others. And I know each of you have a loved one who has been impacted by cancer. I know too, many of you have fought, or continue to fight, a battle with cancer. And so this is just one small way I am acknowledging, remembering, and honoring those who I

know and love who have been impacted by this awful disease. Not to mention it gets people talking about *wild* and *hairy* issues, like for instance, "*Why is the pastor looking so scruffy?*" Which can be responded to by saying, "*Oh, that's because he's participating in 'No-Shave November' which seeks to create a broader awareness to cancer prevention, help save lives, and aid those fighting the battle of cancer.*"

November is a time to reap and gather; a time to remember and give thanks; a time to celebrate all that is good around us—most especially the abundance that comes from God. And November is a time, for me at least, to embrace the *hairiness* of life. So if things get a bit too hairy for you, or if they are too un-kept for what you think a pastor ought to look, I hope you will take a second to remind yourself that in the hairiness of life, there is love to be found. May we all find it. And may we all do whatever we can to help others find it too. Happy Thanksgiving.

~Jonathan

Acme Community Cash Back! **August 4th – December 25th**

Save all your Acme Receipts from August 4th through December 25th! There will be a box in the sanctuary to deposit your receipts in on Sundays. Proceeds will benefit Dorcas Rebekah Guild, Mary Martha Guild, and our Blanket Ministry.

Camp Christian Christmas Market **December 3rd, 10 a.m. 6 p.m.**

If you can't make it to the Relay for Life Craft Bazaar, but are looking to help another organization and get your Christmas shopping done, visit Camp Christian for the Christmas Market! There's going to be a

wide variety of vendors, small businesses and yard sale booths. There will also be carolers, music, crafts for kids, and gift wrapping stations. If you're looking to sign up, Vendor sign up forms are available in the per request at the Church Office.

Overnight accommodations at the camp can be made on Friday night for those attending and vendors.

Trunk or Treat Wrap Up

We had a fun afternoon at Trunk or Treat! Thanks to everyone who came out, we had 170 children trick-or-treat at FCC Stow. Special thanks to all our volunteers for hosting trunks and everyone who donated candy! The CE Department cannot hold this annual community event without the generous support of the congregation!!

Advent, 2022 **Begins November 27th**

“As you leave this place, may you go knowing that from generation to generation, we have been claimed and loved.

From generation to generation,
God has been by our side.

From generation to generation,
We are not alone.

The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow

knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth, saying ‘Go be the person you are called to be, love wildly, do justice, and come back soon.’

May it be so. Amen”

From Generation to Generation, we have been claimed and loved. At the core of the Advent story, revealed to us through the Gospels, is a story about love from God to humankind. This year, we will be focusing on the humans in the story of Advent, as God interacts with them, urges them forward, and as they pray to God for guidance to understand the full picture of the Advent story. As we make our way into Advent, and through Christmastide to Epiphany, we will see how God has always been reminding us, that from generation to generation, we too have been claimed and loved.

Stewardship Campaign letter found below



**Stewardship is our faith in God’s abundance
even in times of scarcity, and willingness
to bring abundance to others.**

Good morning First Christian Family!

The Stewardship Team would like to thank you all for your participation in our 2nd Annual Stewardship Campaign of “**Devoted in Generosity.**” We first want to thank you for your commitment throughout the year, whether it’s been through your time, your talents, worshipping with us, in-person, tuning into worship through Facebook Live or on YouTube.

We hope that the campaign has shed some light on what and where your money is used, but we are truly blessed by the fact that you have remained “Devoted to Generosity” throughout 2022. Hopefully you have enjoyed the stories shared with us over the last few weeks. They included our Technology improvements as well as highlights of the Church Chats from Christian Sanko, our Food Bank & Loaves and Fishes by Tom Safford, and the Bull Dog Bags presented by Laura Root. Your support throughout the year serves many ministries outside of our church, including in our community, throughout the nation and world.

You now should have received a letter with a pledge card, stamped and self-addressed envelope. If you haven’t received this letter with pledge card, please notify the church so we can get one to you. There will be extra pledge cards outside the church office, or if you have a printer, you can print out the card below and return. Simply mail to or drop off at the church, attention Stewardship.

Yours in Christ,

Jim Hindel, Stewardship Chair



Devoted to Generosity
Celebration Sunday Estimate of Giving Card

In response to God’s generosity and
as an expression of my faith:

MY COMMITMENT TO THE GENERAL FUND IS \$ _____
Is this contribution an increase over last year? *Check one: Weekly* *Monthly* *Annually*

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) ____ - _____ Email: _____

Update from the Finance/Stewardship Team

Financial Giving from the Congregation through October 2022

We won't close the financial books for October for a couple more days, but I wanted to provide a status of where we are currently with our congregational giving. The numbers below are not final but I believe they are a close estimate of the final numbers.

The Total Income **budget** amount is \$23,203 per month. This includes congregational giving and other income sources like building rental.

For the month of October, so far, our **actual** income is \$28,519. For the month this is above the budget amount by \$5,316. A large amount of that overage is money received for our Christmas Ingathering, which we still consider Income. But even if we adjust for that, the income received towards our Operating Expenses is still positive and above our budgeted amount for the month. Because of this increase in October, our YTD numbers have also improved. Though we are still below budget overall, the YTD shortage is a smaller percentage, where at the end of September we were 4.6% below budget overall, now we are only 1.5% below budget overall for Income. We are truly blessed as a congregation!

Here is the information in table format:

2022	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	July-Sept	Oct	YTD
Actual Income	\$75,932	\$63,566	\$60,757	\$28,519	\$228,774
Budget Income	\$69,609	\$69,609	\$69,609	\$23,203	\$232,028
Actual Income-Budget Income	\$6,324	(\$6,043)	(\$8,852)	\$5,316	(\$3,254)
% Actual Over Budget Income	9.1%	-8.7%	-12.7%	22.9%	-1.4%

As we shared last December, the budget approved by the Governing Board and the congregation for 2022 has the total expenses higher than the total income. We refer to that gap as our Leap of Faith, with the hopeful expectation that throughout the year we will be able to both increase our income and control our expenses appropriately.

The 2022 Leap of Faith amount is \$19,481 for the full year, which is 7% above our budget income.

if you personally are feeling financially stable and would like to make an additional gift to the church above your normal giving, those are always appreciated. Any increases will help position us to be able to increase the outreach assistance we can provide to our community, both local and globally.

Please let any member of the Finance/Stewardship team know if you would like to see our full reports, we are happy to share them.

YOUTH GROUP

@FCCSTOW

NOV

Planning over Lunch

Sunday, November 6th

11:40am - 1:10pm

Lunch Provided

Loaves & Fishes Helping

Sunday, November 20th

3pm - 5pm

Thanksgiving Dinner is Served!

Ingathering Target

Shopping Day!

11:40am - 1:10pm

Lunch Provided